**IT Applications, Unit 4**

**ONSCREEN DESIGN ELEMENTS, P 233**

Onscreen solutions need to be carefully designed to create user-friendly onscreen productions.

**POCCCC**

**Proportion**

* 1. **What is meant by the hierarchy of a page?**

The designer must ensure that the most important pieces of information have visual prominence on the page, with less vital information taking a less prominent position on the page.

* 1. **What factors affect the visual hierarchy of a screen?**

The proportions, or relevant sizing of the fonts and graphics, positioning of particular elements, white space around the elements, formatting of the fonts and use of animation affect the visual hierarchy of a screen.

**Orientation**

1. **What does orientation refer to?**

Orientation refers to direction and aspect of elements of an onscreen page.

1. **List some typical considerations for orientation of screen elements.**

* Direction that a logo is to face
* Where navigation frames should be
* Alignment of text
* The size of the onscreen page

**Clarity and consistency**

Eg. similar layout for different pages;

Elements that can be used consistently include logos, headers and footers, font styles, navigation icons, etc.

1. **What does clarity refer to?**

Clarity refers to how clearly the information on a screen is presented and how well the user can distinguish between visual elements on the screen.

1. **List characteristics of a clear screen.**

* Font styles and sizes
* Resolution of graphics.
* Visual detail in a video.

1. **What is meant by consistency?**

Consistency refers to the use of similar, repeated or predictable features on a screen so that the user can navigate without confusion or error.

1. **List elements that can be used to support the consistency of an onscreen document.**

* Company logos
* Headers and footers
* Font styles
* Numbering styles
* Search files
* Navigation icons
* Frames
* Colour schemes

**Colour and contrast**

1. **What are the conventions for onscreen colours?**

* The most easily read colours for text are black writing on white background
* Avoid using red and green together, because colour blind people have difficulty distinguishing between them.
* Limit the variety of colours on a screen
* Light or pastel colours are the best for backgrounds
* Avoid using bright or vivid colours for the background unless emphasis is needed.
* Blue is a standard colour for an unvisited hyperlink, changing to purple when visited. If other colours are chosen they should be consistent.

1. **What is the role of whitespace in assisting the contrast in an onscreen product?**

Whitespace allows contrast between the different elements and also helps to achieve clarity. Whitespace can be used as a border or contrast around an element to emphasis it.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF ONSCREEN SOLUTIONS: EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE USER INTERFACES, P 238**

1. **What is the user interface?**

User interface is the point at which a user interacts with an information system.

**In addition to the design elements already considered high quality user interfaces need to consider the following:**

**Usability and accessibility**

* 1. **What is meant by usability?**

Useability is a key element in design for onscreen products. The product should feel simple and straightforward to use, even though much research and planning may lay behind it. The required information should be able to be found quickly and the user should be able to focus on the information. The user interacts with interface intuitively

* 1. **List some factors that contribute to increased usability.**
* Screen shouldn’t be unnecessarily elaborate or decorative
* Long or wide screens requiring scrolling should be avoided
* Font selection
* Clear navigation
  1. **Which fonts are used for headings and body of document?**

You should use serif fonts for body and sans serif for headings

* 1. **What is meant by accessibility?**

Accessibility for all user groups is important. An onscreen product should be accessible by users of varying skill levels as well as users with disabilities. The user should be able to know what each button means and the buttons and headings should b literal for easy navigation.

* 1. **List examples of conventional navigation symbols.**
* Question mark for help icon
* House symbol for home icon
* Backwards and forwards arrows for next and previous pages. 
  1. **What other factors must interface designers consider?**

The interface designers may be working with high quality internet and the latest hardware and software. The designer needs to consider users that do not have the latest fastest software and hardware. They also need to be aware of the characteristics of their target audience. E.g. being aware of vision impaired users or users with other disabilities.

* 1. **What are built in redundancies in an onscreen product?**

Interface designers will often incorporate redundancies into an onscreen product that will allow the users more than one way of performing an action. For example, there may be an icon, a drop down box or a keyboard shortcut that all may perform the same action. This is done to offer greater accessibility to the information.

**Appropriateness and relevance.**

1. **What characteristics must an onscreen product have to meet the needs of its audience?**

The product must be able to present the right information for it audience in a usable format, and in a timely manner.

1. **List items to avoid.**

* Technical language or jargon
* Distracting and irrelevant elements

**CHARACTERISTICS OF ONSCREEN SOLUTIONS: CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE.**

1. **What does information architecture refer to?**

Information architecture refers to the way that the information is structured and the ways it can be navigated by a user.